

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 269767

BONN FOR RCO

FOLLOWING REPEAT OECD PARIS 29270 ACTION SECSTATE 06 DEC

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L OECD PARIS 29270

FOR DEAN BROWN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, OECD, ACOM

SUBJECT: THE INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY AND MISSION
COMMUNICATIONS

1. SUMMARY. MISSION REQUESTS DEPARTMENT REVIEW ON
URGENT BASIS PROBLEM OF INSURING FAST AND SECURE
COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT TO U.S. PARTICIPATION IN
INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY IN EVENT OF NEW OIL SUPPLY
EMERGENCY THIS WINTER. MISSION AND EMBASSY BELIEVE
MISSION'S PRESENT COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITIES COULD WELL
PROVE INADEQUATE IN A CRITICAL EMERGENCY. MISSION WITH
EMBASSY CONCURRENCE THEREFORE REQUESTS YOU SEND
COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT ASAP TO SURVEY SITUATION AND
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RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS. END SUMMARY

2. THE NOV. 18 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IEA WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF OECD HAS ADDED A BROAD, AND MAJOR, NEW DIMENSION TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION. SIMILARLY, IT HAS CREATED SIGNIFICANT NEW OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE U.S. MISSION ACTING IN SUPPORT OF THE NEW ENERGY AGENCY. WE HAVE BEEN REVIEWING OUR PROCEDURES AND FACILITIES HERE TO ENSURE THAT THE MISSION IS PREPARED TO RESPOND TO THESE ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING IN PARTICULAR OUR ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE RAPIDLY AND SECURELY WITH THE DEPARTMENT IN THE EVENT OF ANOTHER OIL SUPPLY EMERGENCY THIS WINTER.

3. WE BELIEVE THAT, UNDER NORMAL CONDITIONS, THE MISSION HAS THE NECESSARY COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT TO FULFILL ITS NEW RESPONSIBILITIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE IEA (AS WELL AS WITH THE NEW RECYCLING FUND RECENTLY PROPOSED BY THE SECRETARY TO BE SET UP SOON WITHIN OECD). WE DO NOT BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT, AS PRESENTLY EQUIPPED, WE COULD ASSURE ADEQUATE AND SPEEDY COMMUNICATIONS UNDER CRISIS CONDITIONS.

4. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, USOECD HAS NO COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY OF ITS OWN AND IS DEPENDENT ON EMBASSY PARIS FOR RECEIPT AND TRANSMISSION OF ALL MESSAGE TRAFFIC. THIS HAS WORKED REASONABLY WELL IN THE PAST, AND THE EMBASSY'S SUPPORT IN THIS REGARD HAS BEEN EXCELLENT. THE SYSTEM HAS A SERIOUS FLAW, HOWEVER, SINCE ALL MESSAGES, CLASSIFIED AS WELL AS UNCLASSIFIED, MUST BE CARRIED BY MESSENGER ACROSS TOWN BETWEEN THE EMBASSY AND THE MISSION. ASIDE FROM THE PROBLEM OF ASSURING IMMEDIATE PICK-UP BY THE MESSENGER (EMBASSY IS PRESENTLY EXAMINING OUR PROPOSAL TO INCREASE DAILY MESSENGER RUNS FROM TWO TO FOUR), THE ONE-WAY TRIP TAKES 45 MINUTES AND SOMETIMES MUCH LONGER, DEPENDING ON THE SEVERITY OF CONGESTION. IF A MESSENGER IS NOT IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE (AND EVEN WITH A MORE FREQUENT SCHEDULE THIS IS LIKELY TO OCCUR) AN URGENT MESSAGE CAN BE DELAYED FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR. A GOOD ILLUSTRATION

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OF THE WEAKNESS OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM FOR HANDLING OF IMMEDIATE OR FLASH PRECEDENCE COMMUNICATIONS IS THE FACT THAT, IN ONE RECENT INSTANCE' AN IMMEDIATE PRECEDENCE MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY TO SECRETARY-GENERAL VAN LENNEP TOOK THREE HOURS TO GET FROM THE EMBASSY TO USOECD. WHILE WITH MOST MESSAGE TRAFFIC SUCH DELAYS MAY NOT MATTER MUCH, ONE OF THE IEA'S PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS IS TO SERVE AS AN INTERNATIONAL

CRISIS MANAGEMENT BODY, AND IT SEEMS TO US THAT SUCH DELAYS WOULD BE INTOLERABLE FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF MESSAGES WE MIGHT RECEIVE OR SEND IN A CRISIS.

5. OUR CONCERNS IN THIS REGARD ARE SHARED BY OTHER DELEGATIONS, PARTICULARLY THE BRITISH AND THE CANADIANS, WHO ARE ALSO SEPARATED BY CONSIDERABLE DISTANCES FROM THEIR EMBASSIES. THE BRITISH DELEGATION HAS ALREADY EXPRESSED ITS CONCERNS TO LONDON AND IS EXPECTING AN ON-SITE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROBLEM BY A COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT SHORTLY.

6. TO SUM UP, WE BELIEVE THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT IS UNRELIABLE FOR THE HANDLING OF HIGH-PRECEDENCE TRAFFIC. IF THIS SITUATION IS NOT REMEDIED QUICKLY, WE RUN A SERIOUS RISK OF BEING UNABLE TO RESPOND FULLY TO THE NEEDS OF THE DEPARTMENT AND THE USG IN THE POSSIBLE EVENT OF ANOTHER OIL EMERGENCY, AND THE ACTIVATION OF THE IEA EMERGENCY OIL ALLOCATION PROGRAM THIS WINTER. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE SPECIFIC SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM MAY BE, AND LEAVE THIS TO COMMUNICATIONS EXPERTS TO DECIDE. (WE UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT THE BRITISH MAY BE CONSIDERING SOME FORM OF SECURE, LDX-TYPE LINK BETWEEN THEIR DELEGATION AND EMBASSY.)

7. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT YOU SEND A COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO REVIEW THE SITUATION AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ITS SOLUTION. WE BELIEVE THE NEED IS URGENT. EMBASSY HAS REVIEWED AND CONCURS WITH THIS MESSAGE.
TURNER UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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